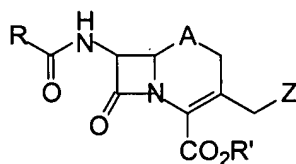


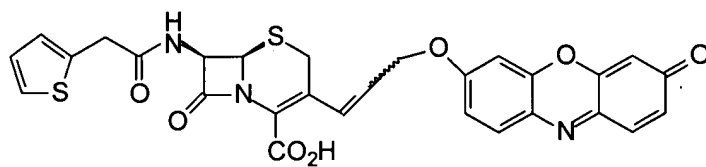
**IN THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend paragraph [0046] on page 12 of the specification as follows:

[0046] In conjunction with a suitable  $\beta$ -lactamase, there are employed in accordance with the present invention fluorogenic substrates of the general formula I or formula IA:



(I)



(IA)

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in which R is a benzyl, 2-thienylmethyl, or cyanomethyl group; R' is selected from the group consisting of H, physiologically acceptable salts or metal, ester groups, ammonium cations,  $-\text{CHR}_2\text{OCO}(\text{CH}_2)_n\text{CH}_3$ ,  $-\text{CHR}_2\text{OCOC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ , thioacetyl ~~acylthiomethyl~~, ~~acyloxy-alpha-~~ acyloxy-benzyl, deltabutyrolactonyl, methoxycarbonyloxymethyl, phenyl, methylsulphinylmethyl,  $\beta$ -morpholinoethyl, dialkylaminoethyl, and dialkylaminocarbonyloxymethyl, in which  $\text{R}_2$  is selected from the group consisting of H and lower alkyl; A is selected from the group consisting of S, O, SO,  $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{CH}_2$ ; and Z is a donor fluorescent moiety, selected from the group consisting of:

Please amend paragraph [0050] on page 15 of the specification as follows:

[0050] A general method for synthesis of compounds of ~~general~~ formula IA is depicted below (Scheme 1). As one of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate, the methods below can be used for a variety of derivatives, and other methods of synthesis are possible, including synthetic methods for preparing the compounds of general formula I.